



**BASEMENT  
SUBLET  
ISSUE**

**#4**

**MARCH  
2016**

# THE BASEMENT SUBLET OF HORROR

**MAGAZINE**



**INTERVIEW WITH ARTIST  
BRADLEY BEARD**



**CHAMBERLAIN'S GUIDE  
TO KARLOFF FILMS**

**ALSO:**

**TRUE KANSAS UFO STORIES**

**BY DAVE TOPLIKAR**







Horror hosts on this page: The Host - Tom Leahy Jr., Gregory Graves, Crematia Mortem, Marilyn the Witch, Zacherley, Penny Dreadful, Evelle Lechat, Butch R. Cleaver and Uncle Roy Hoggins.

# THE BASEMENT SUBLET OF HORROR MAGAZINE

MARCH 2016, ISSUE #4

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Horror hosts on this page: Joel Hodgson, Dr. Sarcofiguy, Count Gregula, Morgus the Magnificent, Rod Serling, Dr. Ivan Cryptosis, The Crypt Keeper, Ms. Monster and Vic Von Scary



# BRADLEY DEARD

## HORROR PORTRAIT GURU

*Interview by  
Richard Chamberlain & BSOH*

Last year Bradley started a daily horror portrait project where he's been producing a new finished drawing every day, the project has evolved to feature a new horror host each day. As of this writing Bradley has been working on the project for the past 350 days, producing an incredible body of work. Bradley was kind enough to take time out of his really busy schedule to allow us this interview.

Thank you Bradley for taking time out to chat with us here at The Basement Sublet of Horror. Your graphic designs, illustrations, and your horror host series are amazing.

**BSOH:** What was the defining moment for you that inspired you to become an artist?

**BB:** First, I would like to say thank you for the compliment and your support of my work and I also thank you for your assistance with this project. (Editors note: BSOH has been providing photographs and information about classic hosts to Bradley for the past year)



The defining moment for me was when I was a kid and discovered Famous Monsters #103 on the newsstand in the grocery store. It had the most amazing Basil Gogos Creature from the Black Lagoon cover and I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I sat and stared at that cover the entire time my mom did her shopping. I remember seeing the word Gogos painted onto the artwork and had no idea what that meant. I must've been about 9 and had no idea at that time that artists actually signed their work. When I did finally realize that Gogos was the artists name, I tried to get my little hands on everything that Basil painted. I started creating artwork when I was 4 years old, in fact, my parents even saved my first piece of artwork which I have to this day. But until I actually saw the cover of Famous Monsters #103, I don't think that I actually realized that art was something I could aspire to as a career. For years, I wanted to be Basil Gogos.

(Host portraits on this page: Boris Karloff, left. Bob Wilkens, right)

**BSOH:** What was your first design/creation? Describe the process on how you developed the idea? Would you do anything different about it today?

**BB:** It's really hard to say what my first design was. I actually got rid a lot of work from my early days when it didn't meet with my standards. When I was in my early 20s, I met my first real mentor. I took an Illustration class at the community college and had a brilliant professor who was an incredible illustrator. He saw my previous works and asked me how long I spent creating them. I told him that I usually spent 8 to 10 hours on a piece. He asked me if I thought that was too much time and I replied yes. He then told me that he wanted me to spend 100 hours on my next piece, I couldn't believe what I was hearing, I thought he was crazy but I took his advice and began to create what I consider to be possibly my best work. I created a 20X22" pointilism portrait of Boris Karloff from The Bride of Frankenstein using the smallest Rapidograph pen I could find. It literally took me an hour to stipple a one inch square of his clothing. I remember going to bed at night, closing my eyes and seeing nothing but dots. This was the piece that defined my art and was the turning point for everything that I've created thereafter. In my humble opinion, I don't think that I'll ever be able to top that effort. There is absolutely nothing that I would change about it.



**BSOH:** Who were some of your inspirations growing up? Who inspires you today?

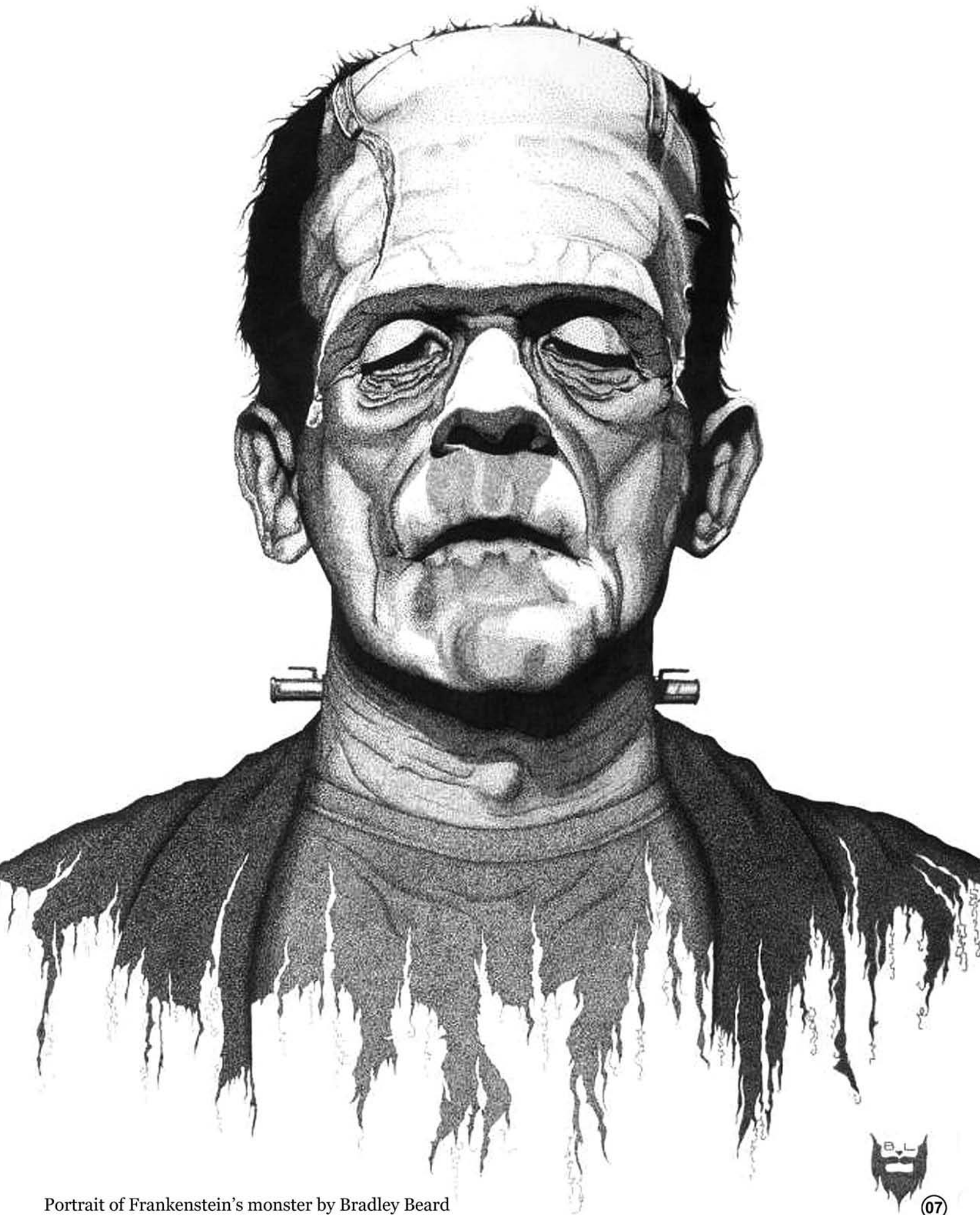
Bradley Beard sketching a rough of one of his horror host portraits.



**BB:** Basil Gogos was obviously my biggest influence as a child. Another I would have to cite as well would be Chester Gould, the creator of Dick Tracy. Dick Tracy absolutely fascinated me. I used to cut the strips out of the newspaper every single day and glue them into a scrapbook. I would marvel for hours over the art and I was incredibly fascinated by his "Rogues Gallery". I loved to draw all of the different villains; Pruneface, Flattop, Mumbles, I drew them all and knew them all. I would have to say that maybe it was Gould who inspired my enjoyment of creating portrait galleries. I was also greatly influenced by Berni Wrightson and his magnificent work Illustrating Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. This was a work that I discovered in my teen years and it became the standard to which I aspired. These are just a few of the artists that had the greatest influence on me but there are numerous others, probably too many to list.

As for artists that inspire me today, I have several young talents that I follow on Facebook. Again, my list is long that it's very hard for me to just acknowledge one or two. I did have the pleasure of meeting Chet Zar today at Monsterpalooza in Burbank. Chet's style is





Portrait of Frankenstein's monster by Bradley Beard



original, unique, and exciting for me so to meet him was truly an honor.

**BSOH:** How would you describe your work today and has it changed any since you first started creating?

**BB:** The work that I'm doing today is minimalist. Minimalism is a huge departure from what I normally do. I have works that I have easily spent more than 100 hours on. I'm used to spending a huge amount of time on detail so working in this style took a little getting used to. Now that I've created over 350 designs in this style, it's become almost formulaic for me. Many people are familiar with this style but they really have no idea exactly what my artistic capabilities truly are. Once I'm done with my daily designs, I will start to create more detail oriented work again, depending on the demands on my time.

**BSOH:** Which of your designs is your personal favorite and why?

**BB:** My personal favorite would have to be my Boris Karloff Frankenstein that I created using the pointillism technique. I consider it my most pivotal work as it defined me as an artist and set the standard for all the work that followed. Although I did plenty of artwork prior to this piece, I actually consider this to be my first real master work. I also have another piece that I recently created using Adobe Illustrator entitled "A Good Day To Die". It's not a horror related piece, oddly enough, it's a very detailed still life that I spent over 100 hours on, quite possibly the most photorealistic of all my pieces.

**BSOH:** Do you have any designs you want to go back and change? If yes, why?

**BB:** Yes, there are a few. Working under normal circumstances, I don't consider a piece of work finished until it meets with my strict approval. However, working under my current daily time schedule, I don't have a chance to second guess a design. I design it during the day and it gets posted later that night. A few designs have not met my approval but I had no choice but to post them or risk breaking my 13 month run, which is not an option. I plan to rerun the project on Instagram starting on October 1 for all those who either missed it or those who just want to follow it one more time. My plan is to revamp several pieces, redesign a few, offer alternate color versions, and possibly include some of my original pencil designs.

**BSOH:** Tell us about your horror host project? How did it start? You mentioned to use earlier that you might have a completion date for the series?

(Hosts, previous page Uncle Creepy, this page Commander U.S.A.)



After formalizing a rough sketch Bradley, moves the image to computer, where he finalizes the lines.





**BB:** The whole project started as a self-imposed Facebook challenge, a way to show my family and friends some new designs. One of my friends shared my work with one of her friends who just happened to be the horror host Professor Anton Griffin. Griffin followed my project and at the end of three months, I suggested to him the possibility of designing horror hosts. He quickly embraced the idea and provided me with numerous suggestions for subjects. He graciously shared my work with all of his horror hosts friends and it immediately took off. Halloween Jack actually scheduled my first radio interview on Kreepy Kastle radio two weeks after I began designing the horror hosts. The response and support of my work from the horror host community has been overwhelming, I owe thanks to every host that I've been in contact with. It has been such a fun and rewarding experience and I couldn't imagine it any other way.

By the time of this publication, the completion date will have already been announced. I plan to conclude the project on Halloween October 31, I couldn't end it on any other date. The project is tentatively titled "13 Months of Horror", encompassing my 13 month insanity of creating and posting a new piece of artwork every single day for 396 days.

**BSOH:** You mentioned that collectors, fans, and even horror hosts have been contributing to your horror host portrait series. Were there interesting experiences or interactions that you'd be willing to share with us?

**BB:** I've had so many amazing experiences and interactions that it's hard to pin down just one. Immediately when I began this project, numerous hosts and fans came forth with their requests and most importantly, their assistance. It would be too difficult to name all of the people who have contributed to this project in this space but let's just say, they all know who they are and when the time comes for this work to be published, proper credit will be given where credit is due. I think the one experience that really stood out for me was when I presented the first Dr. Terror back in January. A fan came to me and asked me if I could design him, he advised me that Dr. Terror, now an elderly man, is suffering from serious physical ailments and it would mean a lot to the family if I were to design his portrait. After he got me the reference, I designed Dr. Terror literally the next day. His son and I became friends on Facebook, his son showed my portrait to his father, and the family was so thankful that I had acknowledged him in this way. It was such an honor for me to be able to do this as it meant so much to them.



(One of the impressive aspects of Bradley's horror host series is its inclusion of hosts not usually recognized. Here's Penn Jillette, Butch Patrick (the former Eddie Munster), and Neil Gaiman)

**BSOH:** What are your aspirations or what direction would you like to head towards for the coming years?

**BB:** My main aspiration and driving force is that I would like to be able to make a substantial living off my art. I've worked in the corporate world for over 30 years now and have little to show for it. It's supported my family and my lifestyle but hasn't afforded me much more. I want to be able to wake up in the morning with a pencil in my hand and go to bed the same way, knowing that the hours I've spent in between were doing what I love to do and not what I have to do. When it comes to the actual creation of my work, I don't know that I actually envision a direction. Over the years, I've worked in nearly every medium and experimented in numerous styles and I can't really look down any road and see one direction, I just follow the flow of my creative processes. I think that my fans will find it interesting to see just how diverse my abilities are once I'm finished with the "13 Months of Horror".



**BSOH:** You've reached a point where you probably have enough recognition to begin appearing at fan conventions. Do you have any plans for upcoming events you'll be attending or personal appearances?

**BB:** As I finish writing this interview, I'm currently attending the Monsterpalooza convention in Burbank, CA. My family and I came to promote the project and hopefully introduce more people to my art. Dead McMain, a Los Angeles radio horror host and friend, is joining me in full costume to help promote my last month on the project. I have no upcoming events that I plan to attend yet but once the project is finished, I do hope to start hitting the convention circuit. This is all quite new to me so I'm learning as I go.

**BSOH:** Is there a broader ranged project that you were heading towards with the horror host series, we noticed in several Facebook posts that there might be plans for a book?

**BB:** The funny thing is, I never really had long term plans for the project initially. The project began to take on a life of its own and now that it's gone on for so long and has garnered such support, I think it's only inevitable that it eventually gets published. Many have advised me that the project extends beyond just the creation of the artwork, with the written copy that I also include with each portrait, it has become somewhat of a historical documentation of the genre. The only thing that saddens me is that there are so many hosts from the golden era of horror hosting whose names and images have been lost to time, so many that I would've liked to include. I would love for people that have photos of these "lost" hosts to come forward and share it with us to help keep their memories alive.





**BSOH:** How can fans get in contact with you if they want to purchase some of your work?

**BB:** My website is currently in the early design stages and I don't plan to have it up for several more months. My art is not yet available to the public as I'm still determining the best way to handle such a large body of work. For the time being, the best way for fans to contact me is on my Facebook art page. They can Google "Bradley Beard Artist" and find me easily. I love to hear from my fans of my work so please come check me out.

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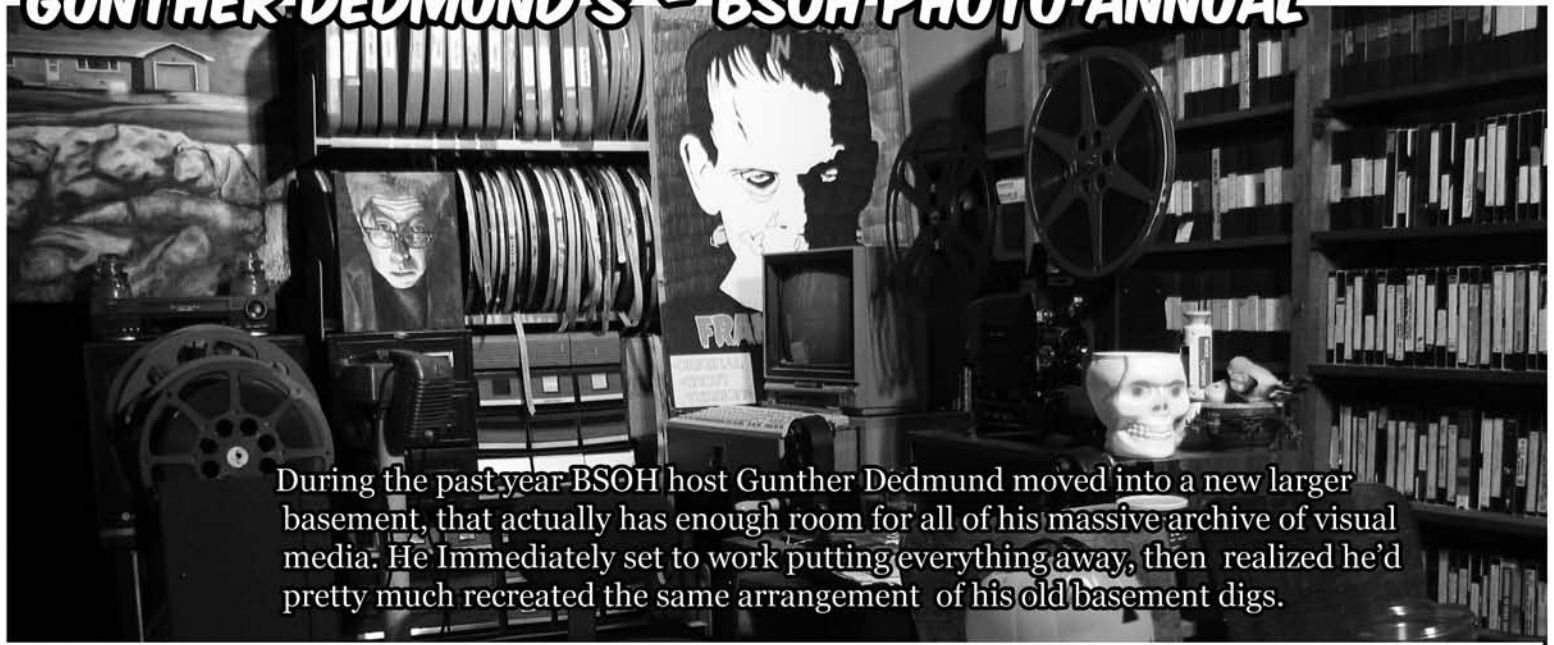
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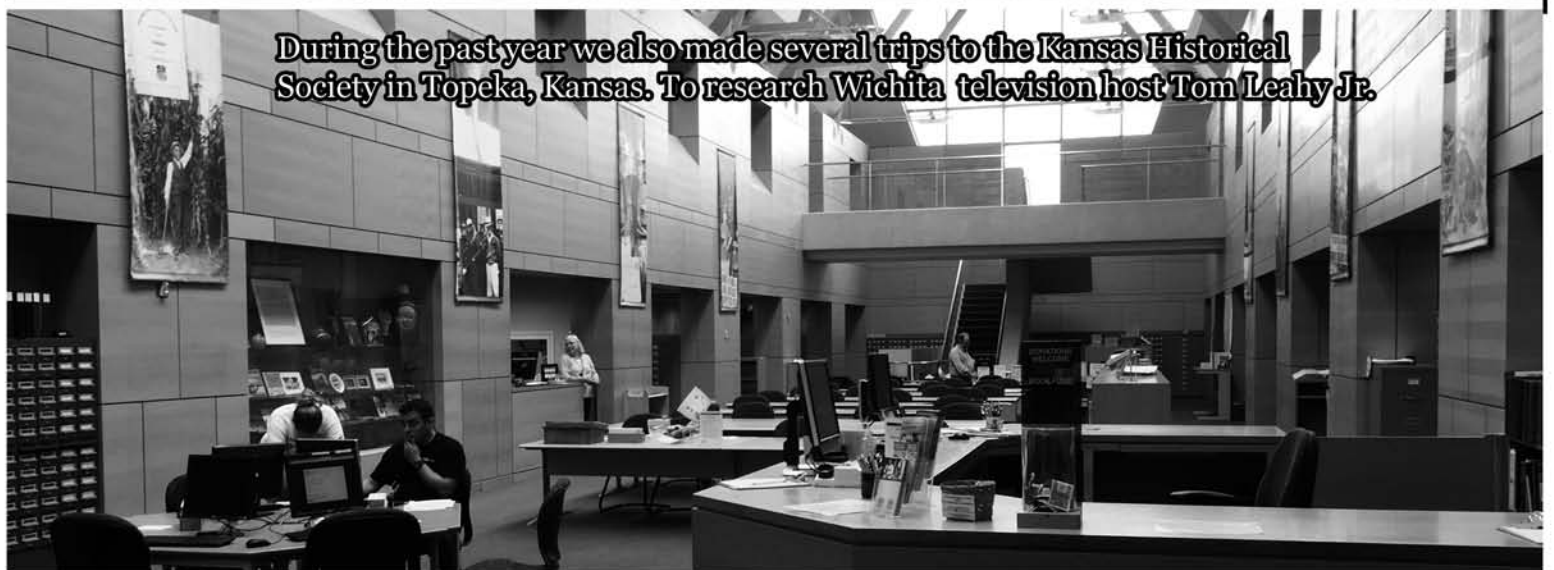
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# GUNTHER DEDMUND'S - BSOH PHOTO ANNUAL



During the past year BSOH host Gunther Dedmund moved into a new larger basement, that actually has enough room for all of his massive archive of visual media. He immediately set to work putting everything away, then realized he'd pretty much recreated the same arrangement of his old basement digs.



During the past year we also made several trips to the Kansas Historical Society in Topeka, Kansas. To research Wichita television host Tom Leahy Jr.



We attended the Air-Capitol Comicon with Lawrence comic convention director Craig Klotz. It was a good show with many of the Lawrence creators in attendance.



Rebecca Mason went with us to Wichita, we ran into media producer Jeff Kilian. Who picked up a copy of BSOH mag #2.





# CHAMBERLAIN'S GUIDE TO THE FILMS OF **BORIS KARLOFF** PART ONE

## FILMS FEATURED IN THIS EDITION:

- **BEDLAM [1946]**
- **BLACK FRIDAY [1940], PAGE 14**
- **BLACK SABBATH [1963], PAGE 15**
- **CORRIDORS OF BLOOD [1958], PAGE 17**
- **CURSE OF THE CRIMSON ALTAR [1968], PAGE 18**
- **DIE, MONSTER, DIE [1965], PAGE 19**
- **FRANKENSTEIN [1936], PAGE 20**
- **THE HOPE DIAMOND MYSTERY [1921], PAGE 21**
- **ISLE OF THE DEAD [1945], PAGE 23**

## **BEDLAM - 1946**

The third and final film collaboration between Boris Karloff and producer Val Lewton came in 1946 with *Bedlam*. It also was last horror film Val Lewton did for RKO Pictures. It was inspired by a series of painting by 18th-century English artist William Hogarth titled "A Rake's Progress". The

paintings chronicle the decline of Tom Rakewell, the son of a merchant who succumbed to the pleasures of gambling and prostitution before ending up in Bethlem Hospital or, it's more notorious name as Bedlam. In *Bedlam*, the hospital is referred to St. Mary's of Bethlehem Asylum. Karloff plays the sadistic apothecary general Master George Sims. He revels in the abuse of the inmates, even using them as entertainment for Lord Mortimer (Billy House, *The Stranger*, *Touch of Evil*), an excessively rich man who is far too easily swayed in support of the abuse. Only Lord Mortimer's protégé, Nell Bowen (Anna Lee, *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*), seems to care about the well-being of the inmates. However, when she becomes a liability, Sims arranges for her to be institutionalized, it's a race for her to find a way out before he manages to break her spirit and her mind. Will showing kindness to the inmates turn the tables and put Master Sims at their mercy?



*Bedlam* suffers from being a period piece and, as such, you really have to put up with a lot of proper English throughout the film. I can enjoy the authenticity to a point but you really have to be in the mood for it. The Quaker storyline gets real tedious at times but the scenes within *Bedlam* are entertaining. Karloff does a fantastic job as Master Sims, switching back and forth from trying to be a proper gentleman to being evil and sadistic when alone at *Bedlam*. I particularly enjoyed seeing his frustration when trying to make a lady out of one of his assistants in an effort to get her close to Lord Mortimer. And sharp eyes will recognize actor Ian Wolfe as the attorney/judge Sidney Long. He appeared twice in episodes of *Star Trek* ("Bread and Circuses" and "All Our Yesterdays") as well as other genre films such as *The Invisible Man's Revenge* (1944) and *Mad Love* (1935).

Karloff clearly enjoyed these films as they gave him opportunities to do something different than he had been doing for quite some time. All three are well worth tracking down in *The Val Lewton Collection*. Have some fun and plan a triple feature for a rainy Saturday afternoon.

## BLACK FRIDAY - 1940

Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi would work together on a total of eight movies. Their collaborations were legendary in Hollywood and are even the subject of a book written by film historian Gregory William Mank, *Bela Lugosi and Boris Karloff: The Expanded Story of a Haunting Collaboration, with a Complete Filmography of Their Films Together*. Their best two films together were *The Black Cat* and *The Raven*. *Gift of Gab* (1934) is an ensemble comedy with the two only appearing in cameo roles. By their fourth film, *The Invisible Ray* (1936), Karloff had already assumed the top role as would be prevalent in their remaining features together. Lugosi gave a great performance in *Son of Frankenstein* (1939) but by the following year's *Black Friday* (1940), the two stars wouldn't even share one scene together. In fact, Lugosi was relegated to only a small part in the film but that wasn't the way it was originally planned.

Boris Karloff stars as Dr. Ernest Sovac, a famous scientist





who has developed a method to replace part of a human brain with that of another. When Sovac's friend Professor George Kinsley (Stanley Ridges, *To Be or Not To Be*) is injured in a car accident, Sovac uses part of the driver's brain to save his life. However, the other man was a notorious gangster named Red Cannon (also played by Stanley Ridges) and soon Professor Kinsley begins to act like Red Cannon. Sovac decides to use this to his advantage as Red Cannon had hidden \$500,000 and Sovac hopes to find the money. But there are other gangsters not far behind as the race is on to find the money.

The movie is told through flashbacks as it begins with Dr. Sovac being led down to the electric chair to die. Death plays a big part in the 70-minute flick with no less than 10 bodies by the time it wraps up. Karloff does his usual fine job as a mad scientist, a role he was perfecting at this time through a series of similar films. However, he was originally cast as George Kinsley/Red Cannon and Bela Lugosi was to be Dr. Sovac. Karloff determined that he was not suited for the dual role and opted to play the mad doctor. Unfortunately for Lugosi, their roles were not automatically switched. The decision was made to cast stage actor Stanley Ridges in the dual role, ultimately turning it into the role of his film career.



For poor Bela, his role was that of gangster Eric Marnay. Despite receiving second billing under Karloff, his role was a much smaller one. Script writer Curt Siodmak was never very fond of Lugosi as an actor, which likely led to the role of Eric Marnay never getting much screen time let alone one scene with Karloff. Lugosi was clearly wrong for the part but, as big studio roles were far and few between now for Lugosi, he never complained and did the best that he could. The most notable part of Lugosi and this film centers on a publicity stunt where Lugosi was supposedly hypnotized prior to his death scene. Sadly, much of it was either cut prior to release or not even filmed at all.

This would be the last time Karloff and Lugosi would star together in a film for Universal Studios. They would star together in two more films with Lugosi having the better role in "You'll Find Out" while suffering a glorified cameo role in their final effort together, **The Body Snatcher** (1945). **Black Friday** is worth checking out but is really only an average film at best and not their best work together. It's part of The Bela Lugosi Collection, if you can still find it, as well as the Universal Vault Series. Check out the trailer for yourself before tracking it down for your personal collection.

## BLACK SABBATH - 1963



In 1963, Boris Karloff would have some of the most fun on a movie set in the later part of his career with the film **Black Sabbath**. Karloff was under contract to American International Pictures and was eager to work with director Mario Bava. **Black Sunday** was a marvelous film and Karloff loved the visual aspects of Bava's films along with his subtle nature towards horror. **Black Sabbath** was an anthology of three tales with Karloff starring in "The Wurdalak" segment.

The original Italian version and the American version do have some big differences. The order of the three tales is different depending on which version you watch. In the Italian version, "The Telephone" story comes first followed by "The Wurdalak" and then, finally, "The Drop of Water". However, in the American version, "The Drop of Water" comes first followed by "The Telephone" and, saving Karloff for last, "The Wurdalak". This is clearly to capitalize on Karloff's star status in the United States, clearly evident from the trailer.

Unfortunately, the stories themselves also had edits made. In the American version of "The Telephone", all elements of lesbianism are removed as well as the character of Frank being rewritten from his original role of a pimp. "The Wurdalak" had some alternate shots and certain violent scenes trimmed down but "The Drop of Water" was essentially unchanged. The soundtrack is completely different with the original music of Roberto Nicolosi replaced with that of Lex Baxter. Finally, the film visually looks different due to different color processing for each of the prints.

Most notably, the big difference is the role that Boris Karloff has in each film. He filmed segments that used him as a narrator or host, introducing each of the stories, much like he had done a few years earlier on his television series *Thriller*. However, these segments were cut from the Italian version. Only a version of the opening monologue remains and the movie ends with Karloff (as Gorca) riding an obviously fake horse serving up a bizarre epilogue that has the camera pulling back to reveal the sound stage and crew. The American version has a different opening monologue and the individual introductions without the bizarre Italian ending. Luckily, the print I have in my collection is the American print so not only do I get more Karloff, I also get to hear his real voice. A Blu-ray was to have been released this month but was canceled due to rights issues. Supposedly, some prints are out there but be prepared to pay top dollar.

Karloff's segment has him playing a vampire for the only time in his career. Set in 19th century Russia, Gorca (Boris Karloff) has left his family to fight a vampire, known here as a wurdalak, only to return with a mean disposition and looking disheveled. The tale that follows has Gorca feeding off his family one by one in rather gruesome manner. It would be great to see the original and unedited version. While it is available, I've not yet seen it as I'm not sure I would enjoy seeing Karloff as much without hearing his voice. However, his dialogue here is limited so I just might have to put the Italian version on the list.

On a fun side note, the rock group Black Sabbath got the name for their band from this film. As the legend goes, when they were still known as Earth, they were playing across the street from a movie theater that was playing Black Sabbath. They decided that people would pay more money to be frightened and thus, they changed their name. The rest is rock and roll history.

I really had fun with Karloff in *Black Sabbath*. His role as host was a throwback to his days on *The Veil* or *Thriller* while it was great seeing him as a vampire. "The Drop of water" segment was creepy but "The Telephone" fell a little flat. Personal preference I guess. It is going to be tricky for you to find the American version on DVD. The Italian print is readily available on various sets and while the American version appears to be available based on website descriptions, it is usually the Italian print. So, buyer beware and prepare to do some hunting.





## CORRIDORS OF BLOOD - 1958

Boris Karloff was impressed with director Robert Day while working on *The Haunted Strangler*. He felt Day had the same stylistic approach to film-making that Val Lewton did, which Karloff believed were some of his best films in the 1940s. His contract with Amalgamated Pictures gave him an option for a second film, so with a desire to return to England in the summer of 1958, Karloff signed on for *The Doctor from Seven Dials*, better known in the US as *Corridors of Blood*.

Despite the fact that horror films were experiencing a resurgence, thanks in large part to the success of Hammer Films, Robert Day was intentionally not resorting to shock factor in his films. The horror elements were more reserved. *Corridors of Blood* would have Karloff playing Dr. Thomas Bolton, a surgeon in 1840s England researching anesthetic gases that would provide painless surgery. While working at the hospital performing surgeries, he does charity work at a clinic in Seven Dials, a slum where a disreputable character named Black Ben owns an inn that some men enter but never leave. Ben works with his wife, an attractive young girl and his henchman Resurrection Joe (Christopher Lee, *Horror of Dracula*) to rob poor unsuspecting men after they are left drunk and helpless. Dr. Bolton is tricked into signing a death certificate, an act that opens the door to bigger troubles down the road.

Dr. Bolton begins to obsess about finding the right mixture, especially after his trial demonstration turns him into a mockery. As he continues to experiment on himself, he begins to spiral into addiction, leaving him easy prey for Black Ben. When Dr. Bolton accidentally leaves behind his research notes during a drug-induced excursion, he is blackmailed into signing falsified more death certificates to help cover up the murders Ben and his crew are piling up. When the hospital suspends Dr. Bolton as it becomes obvious he needs a rest, the situation becomes desperate and forces him to resort to even more questionable means in the name of science.

Karloff never resorts to playing Dr. Bolton as a typical mad scientist. In fact, he really is a more sympathetic man as he never resorts to criminal activities until he is already addicted and murder never even crosses his mind. It's almost hard to consider *Corridors of Blood* a horror film as it's really is more suspense and thriller. The supporting cast is good but its' most fun seeing Christopher Lee in the first of two films he would star alongside Karloff. While Resurrection Joe doesn't do much, he is perhaps one of the scariest aspects of the film. Coming fresh off his role of the monster in *Curse of Frankenstein* (1957), Lee is given special star status in the opening credits, a sign of even better roles to come in the years ahead.

While *The Haunted Strangler* was paired with the equally good *Fiend Without A Face* as part of a double bill when MGM released it in the United States, *Corridors of Blood* didn't do as well. *The Haunted Strangler* had turned a profit of \$140,000 but *Corridors of Blood* was ultimately shelved for four years due to various changes at MGM Studios. When it was finally released in 1962, it was paired with the lesser *Werewolf in a Girl's Dormitory*. Making only a small profit of \$14,000, it was a financial disappointment and the last film from Amalgamated Pictures.

On several levels, *Corridors of Blood* is the better of the two films, telling a better and more believable story but I do enjoy both films equally. I've never seen director Robert Day's film *First Man into Space* (1959) but now my curiosity has me wanting to check it out. Unknowingly, I've already seen some of his other work as he did four Tarzan films as well as the rather notorious Hammer film *She* (1965). I recommend *Corridors of Blood*, so track down the Monster and Madmen box set for some classic Karloff goodness.

## CURSE OF THE CRIMSON ALTAR - 1968

(Continued on the next page)

The year 1968 would give Boris Karloff the opportunity to work along side director Peter Bogdanovich in what many consider to be the greatest film of his career, *Targets*. It was Bogdanovich's theatrical debut and the film is stunning. It is more thriller than horror as it is set in the modern day and deals with a Vietnam veteran who has snapped and goes on a killing spree. Karloff is essentially playing himself in the role of Byron Orlok, an aging horror film star. In fact, clips of *The Terror* (1963) are seen in the climatic drive-in scene.

Ultimately, it was the violence in *Targets* that made the movie hard to sell to the audience. With the assassinations of Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King, there was a public outcry against guns. It eventually was released but without much fanfare at the time. While I do enjoy the film, I must admit it is not a personal favorite of mine. It just seems too gritty and realistic for Karloff and lacks the fun found in most of his films. I'm probably in the minority on one but that's the fun part of the horror community.



Mark Eden (*Séance on a Wet Afternoon*) stars as Robert Manning, who is searching for his lost brother as our film begins. He travels to a countryside home known as Craxted Lodge at Greymarsh (just sounds foreboding doesn't it?) and will soon regret being asked to stay by the niece of the homeowner, Mr. Morley (Christopher Lee). His dreams are restless, full of images of satanic worship and sacrifices. Enter Boris Karloff as the occult expert Professor Marshe. He warns of a cult for Morley's ancestor Lavinia (Barbara Steele, *Black Sunday*). Along the way, we get some fun scenes with Michael Gough (*Black Zoo*) as Elder. Things go rapidly downhill for Robert leading to the obligatory burning mansion by the end of the flick.

*Curse of the Crimson Altar*, released in the United States as *The Crimson Cult*, is a rather forgettable effort due to the very confusing and lazy script. You certainly can't blame its ultimate failure on horror legends Karloff, Lee and Steele as they do the best they can with what little is given them. As usual, Karloff gave the film his all, including filming several night scenes during a rainstorm. Lee recalled how painful it was to watch Karloff as everyone knew how bad his respiratory condition had become by this time. But Karloff was a professional and never said no. Unfortunately, he would contract a very bad case of bronchitis that many believe played a big part in his death less than a year later.



Everyone has an opinion of most of us are accepting without passing judgment. Following *Targets*, Karloff was hard at work again in England alongside Christopher Lee and Barbara Steele in *The Curse of the Crimson Altar*. This would be another ill-fated attempt to adapt an H.P. Lovecraft story, this one being *Dreams in the Witch House*. However, with no less than five writers involved in the screenplay, it ended up being a rather confusing mess.



**Curse of the Crimson Altar** is enjoyable only because of the stars. It is a bit painful to watch as you know everyone did much better work. Nonetheless, I suggest Karloff fans seek it out. It is hard to find in the US so watch the trailer while you look through the usual dark corners of the video outlets.

The film would be released in the U.K. in December 1968 but it would not see wide distribution in the U.S. until the spring of 1970. While it was the last major motion picture Karloff would work on, he still had another four films awaiting him down in Mexico.

## DIE, MONSTER, DIE! - 1965

The year was 1965 and Boris Karloff was now 77 years old. At a time that most actors have long since retired or found that Hollywood has left them behind, Karloff was still in demand. Only his health was keeping him from the busy schedule he once had. His arthritis and emphysema were crippling at times, leaving him wheelchair bound and on oxygen. Yet, there were days when his stamina was high and he would move about as well as a man of 77 could. Still under contract to American International Pictures, his next effort would be **Die, Monster, Die!**

The movie was based loosely on the H.P. Lovecraft story "The Colour Out of Space". It could have benefited from more work on the script as writer Jerry Sohl should have read Lovecraft a little more. What we are left with is a rather boring tale about Stephen Reinhart (Nick Adams), an American scientist who visits the home of his fiancée, finding scorched earth and an enormous crater. As usual, the local townsfolk are fearful of Nahum Whitley (Boris Karloff), the girl's father, because of his mysterious experiments. The radiation from a meteor is mutating the plants and the end results are horrifying. Suffice to say, the movie had great potential but failed in execution due to a very lackluster script. Karloff does what he can with the role, which is ultimately very little. And no, that was not actually Karloff in the end of the movie but a stunt double. His health clearly prevented that kind of movement anymore.



After working as a set designer on some of Roger Corman's Edgar Allan Poe films, such as **House of Usher** (1960) and **The Pit and the Pendulum** (1961), he would make his directorial debut with **Die, Monster, Die!**. He would get another shot at Lovecraft with **The Dunwich Horror** (1970) but most of the rest of his work would be done on television. Nick Adams was a popular young actor becoming known for his television work, which included his own series **The Rebel**, as well as **Frankenstein Conquers The World** and **Invasion of Astro-Monster**, both done in 1965. Sadly, he would pass away in 1968 at the age of only 36 due to a drug overdose.

Karloff was a man who could not say no. Right before doing this film, he appeared in a cameo role in **Bikini Beach**, substituting for his friend Peter Lorre, who had passed away before production began.

Right after *Die, Monster, Die!* wrapped, it was off to Hollywood for a guest appearance on the television series *Shindig* to read the Peppermint Twist and another cameo in the movie *The Ghost in the Invisible Bikini*. He would guest star on *The Wild, Wild West* and *I, Spy* while lending his voice for such productions as *The Daydreamer* and *Mad Monster Party?*. However, his narration of How *The Grinch Stole Christmas!* was something he dearly loved as he enjoyed giving back to children and greatly appreciated the work of Theodor Geisel aka Dr. Seuss. It continues to be one of his most well-known works today, heard numerous times every holiday season.

Check out the trailer for *Die, Monster, Die!* as you shop around for the Blu-ray. I recommend you buy it only if you are obsessive about having a complete collection. It's not horrible but, honestly, not that good either. But it does look great, so at least there is that going for it.

## FRANKENSTEIN - 1931

*We are about to unfold the story of Frankenstein, a man of science who sought to create a man after his own image without reckoning upon God. It is one of the strangest tales ever told. It deals with the two great mysteries of creation – life and death. I think it will thrill you. It may shock you. It might even – horrify you. So if any of you feel that you do not care to subject your nerves to such a strain, now's your chance to – uh, well, we warned you.*

Growing up as a child of the 70s, my generation was the last to grow up without cable television. We didn't get it until I was 11 years old nor did I have access to any UHF channels. There was only one TV station that would play movies on a regular basis and I was lucky enough that they would air some of the Universal Horror classics. I have fond memories of staying up late to watch *Frankenstein* and *Dracula*. I also remember seeing *Revenge of the Creature in 3D* about a year before I was lucky enough to see *Creature from the Black Lagoon in 3D* on the big screen. Years later, I collected them on VHS, seeing many for the first time. I've also bought them on DVD, some twice, so when I heard they were being released on Blu-ray, I initially decided against it. However, as the reviews came in and the restoration sounded amazing, I was tempted. Finally, I saw the special coffin box set in the U.K. and when I heard it was not only region-free but half the price as the U.S. version, I was sold. The restoration on *Dracula* was amazing and *Frankenstein* continued what I anticipate to be a trend with this set.

What can be said of *Frankenstein* that hasn't already said? Bela Lugosi made the mistake of his career by turning down the role. However, it made a star of Boris Karloff.

Karloff is fantastic as the monster and his portrayal here is mostly horrific. It really isn't until *The Bride of Frankenstein* that we truly begin to sympathize with

him. Colin Clive plays Dr. Frankenstein in the first of two appearances. He's a man on the edge, obsessed with solving the mysteries of life and death. In 1931, you see a young actor with a promising career ahead of him. Compare how he looked in '31 to '35 and you'll see a man who ages quite a bit in just four years. Edward Van Sloan (Van Helsing from 1931's *Dracula*) portrays Dr. Waldman, who discovers what Frankenstein is doing and reluctantly agrees to help. Dwight Frye rounds out the primary cast as Fritz, the prototype for the evil hunchback man-servant. Everything we've come to expect from a mad scien-





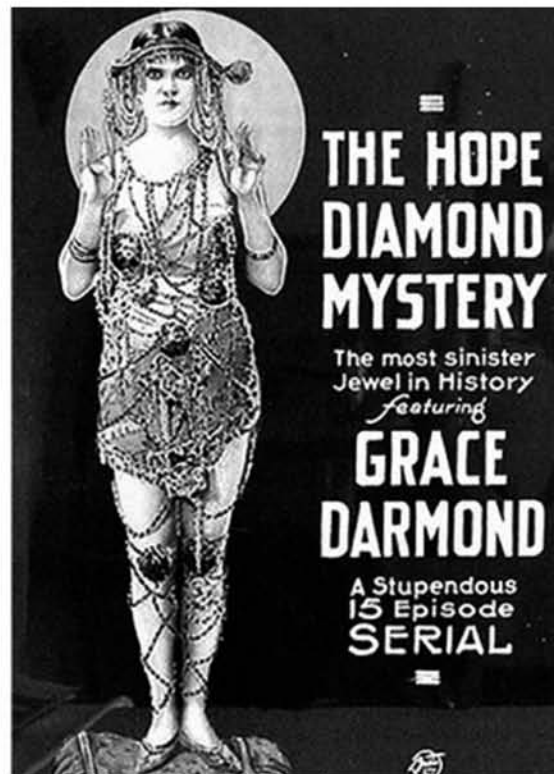
tist movie is present: a crazy laboratory, stormy nights, the unsuspecting wife/girlfriend, the friend who will go against the evil scientist to save the woman he loves. **Frankenstein** is just as enjoyable now as it was the first 20 or 30 times I've seen it. It's amazing that I still see things for the first time. Like I've never noticed this was based on a novel by "Mrs. P.B. Shelley" or the large lump on the neck of Baron Frankenstein. I've watched **Frankenstein** about every other year and never grow tired of it. The fact that people are still going to a theater to watch it some 81 years later is amazing. And the Blu-ray? Well, it's very impressive. It didn't have the restoration **Dracula** received but it's never looked better. Highly recommended.

## THE HOPE DIAMOND MYSTERY - 1921

*"What a labor of love The Hope Diamond Mystery has been and what a treasure it is to have. Thank you so very, very much"* – Sara Karloff

When you get an endorsement like that from the daughter of Boris Karloff, you know you've done something right. Serial Squadron has done what nobody else ever attempted to do before. They have restored and released **The Hope Diamond Mystery** on DVD. This is an incredibly rare 1921 15-chapter serial with Boris Karloff in his first starring role. The story is full of mystery and suspense, well worth the more than four-hour time commitment it will take you to work through this adventure.

The story was written by May Yohe, formerly Lady Francis Hope, the widow of the last person named Hope to own the legendary Hope Diamond. She even stars as herself in the film as narrator for the tale, which is partially based on fact. Being a chapter serial, one can immediately expect a long adventure full of cliffhangers and intrigue, as well as a little padding from time to time. The story is set both in the then present day 1920s as well as the 16th century, with actors playing dual roles. As the saga of the Hope Diamond is revealed through theft and chase scenes, Boris Karloff initially plays East Indian servant Dakar, keeping an ever watchful eye on the diamond. He is also the High Priest of Sita once the story flashes back, ultimately showing the curse upon anyone who possesses the diamond. The film is a little convoluted at times, as most chapter serials can be, but that doesn't necessarily take anything away from the overall story. Karloff is part of an amazing cast that also includes Grace Darmond (**The Shielding Shadow**) as Mary Hilton/Bibi and George Chesebro (**The Lost City**) as John Gregg/Jean-Baptiste Tavanier. The sets are absolutely amazing, as well they should be considering the reported \$100,000 cost to construct them. The film is definitely a lot of fun to watch and well worth having in your personal collection.



I do want to commend Serial Squadron for the work put forth in the overall restoration of **The Hope Diamond Mystery**. According to the **Serial Squadron website**, they used multiple sources, both 35mm and 16mm, and the end result is impressive. Sure, there are some title cards where the deterioration is clearly visible and there are a lot of scratches seen throughout. However, a lot of work was put into digitally eliminating splices and defects. A lot of time also went into color tinting in an effort to match the original presentation, including a blue appearance for the diamond itself. Considering they do not have the resources many larger companies do, and the fact that this film has been unavailable for some 94 years, the film really does look amazing. Eric Stedman should be commended for his hard work.

Unfortunately, I wish the same amount of time would have gone into making a more authentic soundtrack. Silent film soundtrack purists will most likely not be pleased with the music presented here. First, the music is not the traditional silent film fare of piano or organ. A variety of styles are used, some of which are very anachronistic and can pull you out of the moment. Personally, I think the choice of an opening theme is horrendous. It sounds like a Nintendo video game from 1990. I like that musician Kevin McLeod tried to go for an East Indian theme but the end result comes off sounding very cheap. At times, other music is more orchestral and fits the scene while we are infuriatingly dealt what sounds like a modern rave mix in other scenes. They are so far from what should be used that it could be laughable were it not so annoying. Ultimately, I was disappointed with the uneven score and recommend viewing it with the sound off. Go with music of your own choosing and you will probably enjoy it more.

The overall DVD packaging left me with mixed reactions. While I loved the cover, especially the use of blue colors and a great visage of Boris Karloff, the rear cover was really lacking. Honestly, it looked no more professional than something I could have done using outdated software. The fifteen chapters are of an opening theme is horrendous. It sounds like a Nintendo video game from 1990. I like that musician Kevin McLeod tried to go for an East Indian theme but the end result comes off sounding very cheap. At times, other music is more orchestral and fits the scene while we are infuriatingly dealt what sounds like a modern rave mix in other scenes. They are so far from what should be used that it could be laughable were it not so annoying. Ultimately, I was disappointed with the uneven score and recommend viewing it with the sound off. Go with music of your own choosing and you will probably enjoy it more.

The overall DVD packaging left me with mixed reactions. While I loved the cover, especially the use of blue colors and a great visage of Boris Karloff, the rear cover was really lacking. Honestly, it looked no more professional than something I could have done using outdated software. The fifteen chapters are separated over two DVDs, which works well but, upon opening the case, I was so incredibly disappointed to find that neither disc had a label. No screen printed image, no simple title labeling, nothing. Having seen a recent discussion on Facebook where the owner of Serial Squadron got very defensive about the pricing of their product, I expected more. What I got was a hand written "HDM1" and "HDM2" on the inside of the DVDs. The hand writing with an ink pen was shockingly cheap. I've paid far less for bootleg DVDs on eBay that had at least something printed on the DVD. This may seem trivial to some but for me, it makes the finished product seem far less professional and more like a bootleg operation. What I paid was anything but bootleg pricing. The menus were static but easily navigable and acceptable, so I can't complain about that. There were also no extras of any kind but, considering the age of the product, I was okay with that too. It's true that they are very open about their product being essentially a "burn on demand" service. However, the packaging was lacking and needs improvement if Serial Squadron products want to have a more professional appearance to match the higher prices.



Overall, I am very pleased with having this rare Karloff classic in my collection. My complaints on the

DVD are annoying but are partially overshadowed by the fun story and sheer collectability of this once impossible to find adventure. I would consider buying from Serial Squadron again as long as the price is not too high. Their prices do seem to vary from title to title, which is a little frustrating but there does seem to be an effort in place to correct this. It also appears that their VIP membership is a better option and seems worth looking into. My previous complaints aside, I really do want them to succeed because they are giving us film collectors some wonderful viewing options.

I recommend **The Hope Diamond Mystery** on its rarity alone but the story is also very engaging and well worth the extra time it will take you to watch it. You're just going to have to be forgiving when it comes to the packaging and very poor musical choices. Concentrate on the film restoration and you'll be amazed.

## ISLE OF THE DEAD - 1945

The second of the three films Boris Karloff would do with producer Val Lewton was actually going to be the first. ***Isle of the Dead*** (1945) started its troubled production in July 1944 but was halted when Boris Karloff suffered a back injury. Karloff's back problems date back to the original ***Frankenstein*** (1931) when he was forced to carry Colin Clive for hours while also wearing those heavy boots. This was the first real sign of the serious problems that would plague him throughout his career and would eventually leave him wheelchair bound.

The film was inspired by a painting entitled *Isle of the Dead* by Arnold Böcklin. It appears behind the opening credits and would be a strong influence in the script written by Ardel Wray with the usual contributions from Val Lewton, who remains uncredited this time. The film is set during the Greek wars of 1912. This was an important part of Greek history and one of the very few attempts on film to recognize it.

Karloff plays General Pherides, a stern commander who orders one of his men to commit suicide in his very first scene. Along with an American reporter named Oliver Davis (Marc Cramer), he travels to the Isle of the Dead to pay their respects to the general's wife who had died many years earlier. Upon their arrival, they discover the graves have been robbed. They soon meet a group of individuals all displaced from the savages of war, waiting for a lull in the fighting so that they may return home. But they are soon warned by an old housekeeper that vorvolaka is there as well, an evil creature who sucks the life out of human beings. When a fear arises that septicemic plague is on the island after one of the guests dies, they are all quarantined until it runs its course. Is the vorvolaka real and will they survive until they can leave the island?

I first discovered this film on a summer afternoon in 1991. A local television station was airing movies in the late afternoon and many of them were from RKO Pictures. I've always enjoyed the atmosphere that is so typical of Lewton films but I must admit, it's not one of my favorites. Perhaps it's because the movie suffered an odd production and appears disjointed at times. After it was suspended to allow Karloff to have back surgery, Lewton went on to film ***The Body***





**Snatcher** while waiting with Karloff while waiting for the rest of the cast to reunite. The film was one of the most expensive Lewton ever made and, subsequently, barely turned a profit. I think Karloff gives a good performance here but not up to the level he did in **The Body Snatcher** nor his next film with Lewton, **Bedlam** (1946). That said, **Isle of the Dead** is still entertaining and well worth a viewing.



Boris Karloff poses beside the original painting that inspired the film "Isle of the Dead".

CHAMBERLAIN'S GUIDE  
TO THE FILMS OF  
BORIS KARLOFF  
WILL BE  
CONTINUED...

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# CHAMBERLAIN'S TOP 10 BORIS KARLOFF FILMS

Here are my current top 10 favorite Boris Karloff films. As with any list, they will vary depending on my mood but this is what I have as of today. Ask me next week and they'll likely be different. With that said, the Universal classics are always high on the list. I love Karloff and Peter Lorre together, so no surprise two of their films together are represented. And finally, I have a soft spot for #7 as I vividly remember my dad and I watching this on a Saturday night with Crematia Mortem on the Creature Feature in the early 1980s.

1. THE BLACK CAT (1934)
2. BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN (1935)
3. FRANKENSTEIN (1931)
4. THE MUMMY (1932)
5. THE OLD DARK HOUSE (1932)
6. THE BODY SNATCHER (1945)
7. THE BLACK ROOM (1935)
8. THE RAVEN (1963)
9. THE RAVEN (1935)
10. THE BOOGIE MAN WILL GET YOU (1942)

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COUNTRY United States of America		REPORT NO. 60-1	(LEAVE BLANK)
AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT			
SUBJECT UFO			
AREA REPORTED ON		FROM (Agency) Commander, 4347 CCRTNGWG McConnell AFB, Kansas	
DATE OF REPORT 30 August 1960	DATE OF INFORMATION 23 August 1960	EVALUATION F-6	
PREPARED BY (Officer) FRANK A. PFEFFER, Major, USAF		SOURCE Civilian	

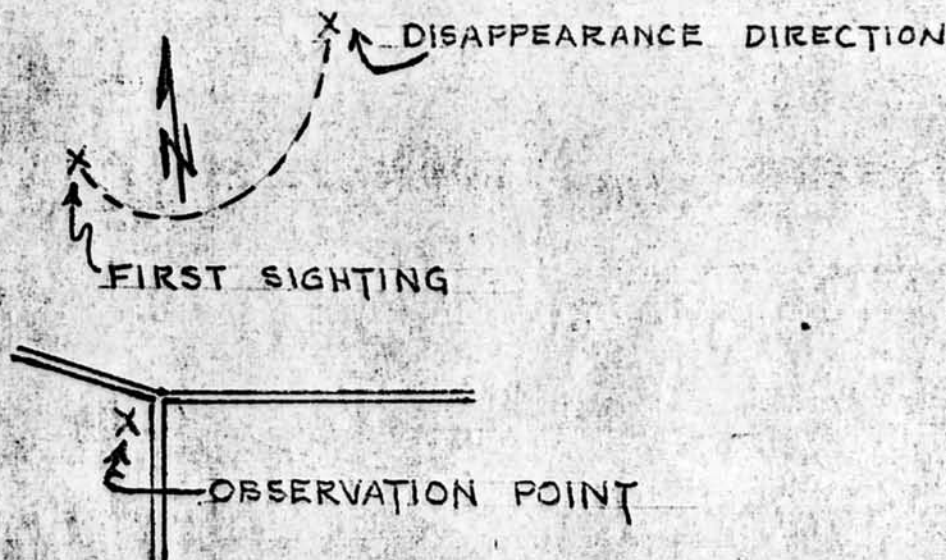
REFERENCES (Control number, directive, previous report, etc., as applicable)

HQ 4347TH CCRTNGWG Msg DCOI 5308 dated 23 Aug 60.

SUMMARY: (Enter concise summary of report. Give significance in final one-sentence paragraph. List inclosures at lower left. Begin text of report on AF Form 112-Part II.)

1. Reference your message 4E2X8-2570E, 26 August 1960. A further investigation as to other sightings and witnesses regarding UFO seen 23 August 1960 has been completed with negative results. (The first investigation included interrogation of B-47 crew members airborne at time of Mr. [REDACTED] sighting and a check with ground radar site in the Hutchinson, Wichita area).

2. [REDACTED], age 37 years, and family ([REDACTED]-wife-age 34 years) ([REDACTED] daughter - age 12) and ([REDACTED] daughter-age 10) were on the front lawn of their home, [REDACTED], Wichita 20, Kansas, observing satellite Echo on the night of 23 August 1960 when they noticed an object coming from approximately a northerly direction at an angle of 040° elevation. They reported that UFO turned slowly in a large radius and disappeared about 005° north of satellite Echo at an angle of 045° elevation. The course of the UFO was smooth with no accelerations, power spurts, etc. The UFO was observed for a period of two minutes (0324 hours to 0326 hours) and appeared to be in the shape of a sphere about the size of a golf ball when held at arms length. Three triangular shaped lights, each about one tenth the size of the sphere, were seen which created an aurora in their direction. The remainder of the sphere was dark and the three lights although yellow in nature gave the sphere an overall effect of a dull orange color.



3. One INCL.



SHAPE AND LOCATION OF TRIANGULAR LIGHT SOURCE

4. It is the opinion of the preparing officer that the UFO was another satellite other than satellite Echo.



# TRUE KANSAS UFO STORIES

## PART ONE

### *Wichita family reports UFO alongside early U.S. satellite*

*By Dave Toplikar*

*From the future publication*

*"Aliens, Martians, & UFOs! Oh, my! - Strange Sightings Over Kansas"*

WICHITA, Kan. (Aug. 23, 1960) — It was a time when families often spent their evenings outdoors, watching fireflies flit through the summer night, gazing at the stars — and dreaming about America's new space program.

But a 37-year-old Boeing aerospace design engineer, his 34-year-old wife, and their two daughters, ages 12 and 10, got more than they bargained for when they went out to spot a new American satellite — they also encountered a UFO that is still unexplained 55 years later in 2015.

The Wichita family, led by the curiosity of the father, an aerospace design engineer, were outside scanning the early morning sky, hoping to track the path of Echo 1A, a 100-foot diameter new American balloon satellite, or "satelloon," that had been recently placed in a low Earth orbit.

Echo, the first communication satellite, was used to bounce radio and TV signals. Shiny from its aluminum coating over a Mylar skin, the 10-stories high Echo was clearly visible in the night sky. It had been orbiting the Earth for about 10 days and had captured the imaginations of Americans interested in the fledgling Eisenhower-era space program.

The Wichita family was outside on their front lawn around 3 a.m. when they spotted the Echo satellite on its trajectory across the sky.

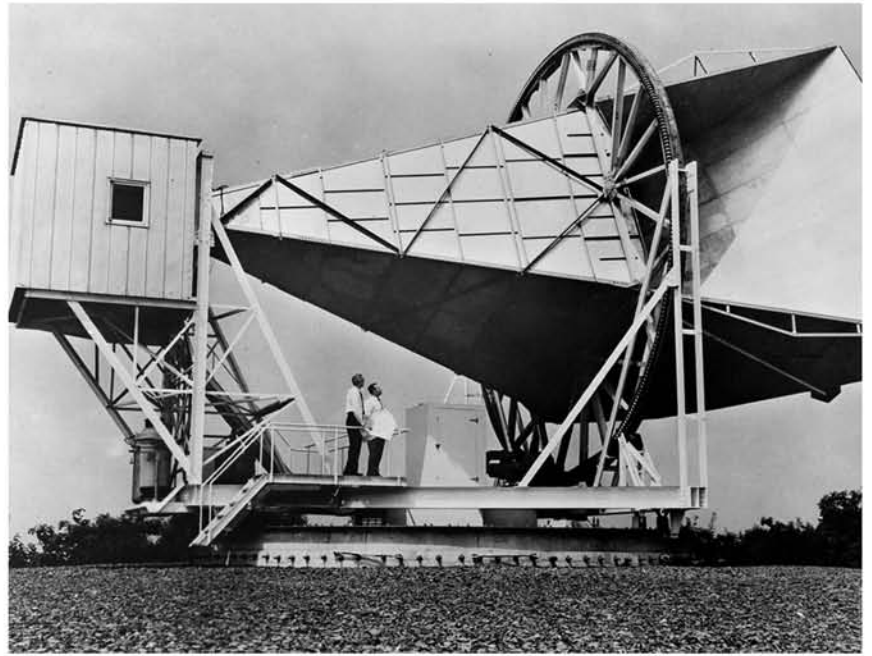


But then, between 3:24 a.m. and 3:26 a.m. they also saw something else — something that shouldn't be there — also travelling across the August 1960s mostly clear and dark night sky.

It was bigger than a planet or a star — about the size of a golf ball held at arm's length. It was round and a dull orange. And it had three triangular "windows" on it that were yellow. It reminded them of a Japanese lantern. It traveled smoothly in an arc, "a pursuit curve on Echo." Then it disappeared.

All we know about what they saw is what's contained in the official Air Force 11-page report from a file from Project Blue Book, the Air Force's report on UFOs. The details were recently made easily accessible online.

The Air Force investigator, Major Robert J. Friend, of the 4347th Combat Crew Training Wing at the U.S. McConnell Air Force Base, dutifully filled out the report in ink, printing carefully in all capital letters, his words widely spaced apart on the form. His analysis suggested either skepticism or even frustration. The analysis sheet had several fields available to him to pigeonhole the sighting: satellite, astronomical phenomena (meteor, comet, planet, etc.), natural phenomena (ball lightning, etc.), aircraft, balloons, airships, etc. and other. But they were all left blank.



The investigator inked in “N/A” on the line concerning radar analysis — not applicable.

His evaluation of the source reliability: “Possibly good —.” It indicated he clearly wanted to believe the witness.

In a report to Air Force Officials at Wright Patterson in Ohio, the male witness was described as being very credible: a civilian, whose occupation was “Aeronautical Engineer (Primary Design), Boeing Aircraft Corporation,” meaning he should have been something of an expert on aircraft and would have been able to recognize what he saw in the night sky. That explains some of the investigator’s wording.

“This report contains much information. But some is rather hard to accept. The witness could see the light sources [described as windows] well enough to determine their exact shapes, indicated their size to be 1/10 that of the object, but was unable to give any real detail concerning other (unreadable) of the object. The object was in sight two minutes and must surely have been traveling at great speed, but the witness didn’t mention this fact. (The object must surely have faded in this time after being close enough for the shape of the object to be determined)

The Wright Patterson report said “Comments: Possible satellite other than satellite Echo.” That might have been the determination of some, but not of the original investigator.

The last page of his handwritten report says “indicates the object was very large by its estimate of a golf ball at arms length . . . . It is hard to understand how this obviously trained witness would not have made a better report. It is probable that the object of this sighting was an aircraft ... tanker, with its special lights on while the crew was trying for a better view of Echo. However in view of the fact that this witness should have been familiar with such an object this case is listed “unidentified.”

*(Editor’s note: This is an ongoing series of stories by Kansas journalist Dave Toplikar of UFO sightings over Kansas that were culled from investigative documents from Project Blue Book, Project Sign and Project Grudge. )*

# TRUE KANSAS UFO STORIES PART TWO

## *UFO spotted over Kansas just days after 1947 Roswell crash*

By Dave Toplikar

*From the future publication*

*"Aliens, Martians, & UFOs! Oh, my! - Strange Sightings Over Kansas"*

CLAY CENTER, Kansas — It happened more than 68 years ago in broad daylight — an unexplained bright silvery object darted in front of a seasoned military pilot as he flew over the wide-open skies of Kansas, near Clay Center.

The sighting was reported and duly cataloged in Project Blue Book, the Air Force's official investigative report about UFOs. Like hundreds of other sightings, the Kansas incident was never fully explained. An investigator guessed it might have been just a sun reflection. "Incident #89" was mostly forgotten.

But in retrospect, it might deserve another look.

That's because the July 6, 1947, Kansas UFO sighting occurred just four days after the July 2, 1947, crash incident in Roswell, N.M.

The Kansas sighting was also a day before the Roswell crash was first reported by the military as a recovered "flying saucer" (July 7, 1947). The military then retracted their statement a day later saying the crash material recovered was from a weather balloon. The Roswell incident has been viewed by many UFO investigators as the beginning of a systematic government cover-up concerning UFOs.

A few details about the Kansas sighting have been reported in various online publications, including the basic details and the pilot's name, Army Air Corps Major Archie B. Browning. But to get more details, you have to go to the official paperwork, the files from Project Blue Book, which are now available online for free public viewing.

By going through the four-page unclassified report contained in the Project Blue Book archives, we can relive the pilot's surprise, his puzzlement — and an investigator's attempt to explain it away.

Under a page marked "Check List — Unidentified Flying Object," we get the main details of the story as the investigator filled out the form. A narrative begins to form.

We learn, from the document, that Browning was a major, meaning he was a seasoned pilot with lots of experience, and would be familiar with seeing lots of things from his Mitchell B-25 bomber's cockpit. Objects such as other aircraft, balloons, clouds in the sky, glares from the sun or reflections were probably just everyday events. It's doubtful he would have even mentioned a glare or a reflection if he saw one.

Browning had been piloting the bomber from Ogden, Utah, enroute to Kansas City, Missouri. The incident started about 1:45 p.m. as he and his crew were flying at 10,000 feet eastward over Kansas, near the town of Clay Center, about 100 miles west of Kansas City.

That's when the pilot saw a very bright object low and to his left, about 10 miles away, the report said.



[REDACTED]

Incident #89 -- 100 mi. W of Kansas City, Missouri -- 6 July 1947

There is no direct astronomical explanation for this incident.

The striking feature of the incident is that the "very bright" object travelled in the same direction and at the same speed as the observer did, and that it appeared at 11 o'clock position at his left, or approximately opposite to the position of the sun at the time.

It cannot be proved, of course, but it is probable that the witness saw a direct reflection of the sun on some continuous object -- thin clouds, ice crystals, or the like. (Had the object appeared on his right, then this explanation would be untenable.) Its disappearance can be explained logically also, for turning altered the observer's angular relationship to the reflector.

It is further noted that an apparent inconsistency exists in the report. The observer first stated that the object appeared to be the top of a water tank "low and to his left"; after checking his position he stated that the object was at 11,000 feet. The inconsistency in altitude throws some suspicion on the observation. If the object was low, then a running reflection along a river or railroad track would be a promising explanation.

[REDACTED]

The pilot's first thought was to categorize it as something familiar — he thought it was the top of a shiny water tower tank. It was round. It was "very bright and silver colored." After checking his position, which took about five seconds, he looked to his left again. The object had moved.

It "seemed to be flying one to two miles off his left wing at 11 o'clock position at 11,000 feet," the report said.

"The brightness of the object was very great," the narrative continued. The pilot reported that the object's diameter was 30 to 50 feet. And it was traveling at the same rate of speed as the plane — 210 mph.



However, the object "disappeared when pilot started to turn into it." The report said the object seemed to accelerate to a high speed before going out of view.

A one-page typed report from the investigator was inconclusive in its analysis. But the investigator did try to make a case that the pilot was merely seeing a reflection of the sun.

"There is no direct astronomical explanation for this incident," the report began.

"The striking feature of the incident is that the 'very bright' object travelled in the same direction and at the same speed as the observer did, and that it appeared at 11 o'clock position at his left, or approximately opposite to the position of the sun at the time.

"It cannot be proved, of course, but it is probable that the witness saw a direct reflection of the sun on some continuous object — thin clouds, ice crystals, or the like. (Had the object appeared on his right, then this explanation would be untenable.) Its disappearance can be explained logically also, for turning altered the observer's angular relationship to the reflector.

"It is further noted that an apparent inconsistency exists in the report," the investigator wrote. "The observer first stated that the object appeared to be the top of a water tank 'low and to his left;' after checking his position he stated that the object was at 11,000 feet.

"The inconsistency in altitude throws some suspicion on the observation. If the object was low, then a running reflection along a river or railroad track would be a promising explanation."

That's all the report's archives have on the event.

Could the pilot have been seeing things? Could it have been merely a reflection?

A further check for some information on the pilot's military service showed that an Army Air Corps

Lt. Archie Browning, possibly the same man, had actually been praised for his visual acuity about four years earlier.

It was for an event just prior to a major Allied victory over Japanese forces just north of New Guinea in the Bismark Sea.

According to hometownheroes.com, a Lt. Archie Browning was flying a B-17 known as “Butcher Boy” over the Bismark Sea just after dawn on March 3, 1943, for the Army Air Corps. Browning spotted movements across the waves beneath his plane. He and his crew cheered as they counted 14 enemy ships crossing the sea toward Lae. His sharp eye led to eight American bombers being called in two hours later to drop the first bombs in the Battle of Bismark Sea.

The write-up on Browning in the South Pacific begs a few questions: Would he make a visual mistake four years later on a routine flight? Would the pilot whose sharp eyes helped locate enemy Japanese ships at sea really mistake a reflection of the sun for something strange and unique? And unless he was sure of it, would he have really reported a UFO?

Given that the 1947 Roswell crash was July 2, it was interesting the Blue Book Project investigator didn’t give more credence to Browning’s UFO sighting on July 6. It could have been that word didn’t travel that fast or that Blue Book investigators couldn’t immediately link the reports.

It turns out the Kansas UFO sighting wasn’t the only one that day. Two UFOs were also reported in California and another in Birmingham, Alabama. That particular week in 1947 brought about two dozen reports of disc-shaped UFOs around the country, particularly on July 4. Dozens of reports came in to authorities about groups of objects or single objects all around the country. An invasion? There were 107 official UFO sightings in 1947, according to Blue Book documents.

Nearly 70 years later, it makes you wonder if the Army Air Corps pilot flying over Kansas saw more than just a reflection of the sun.

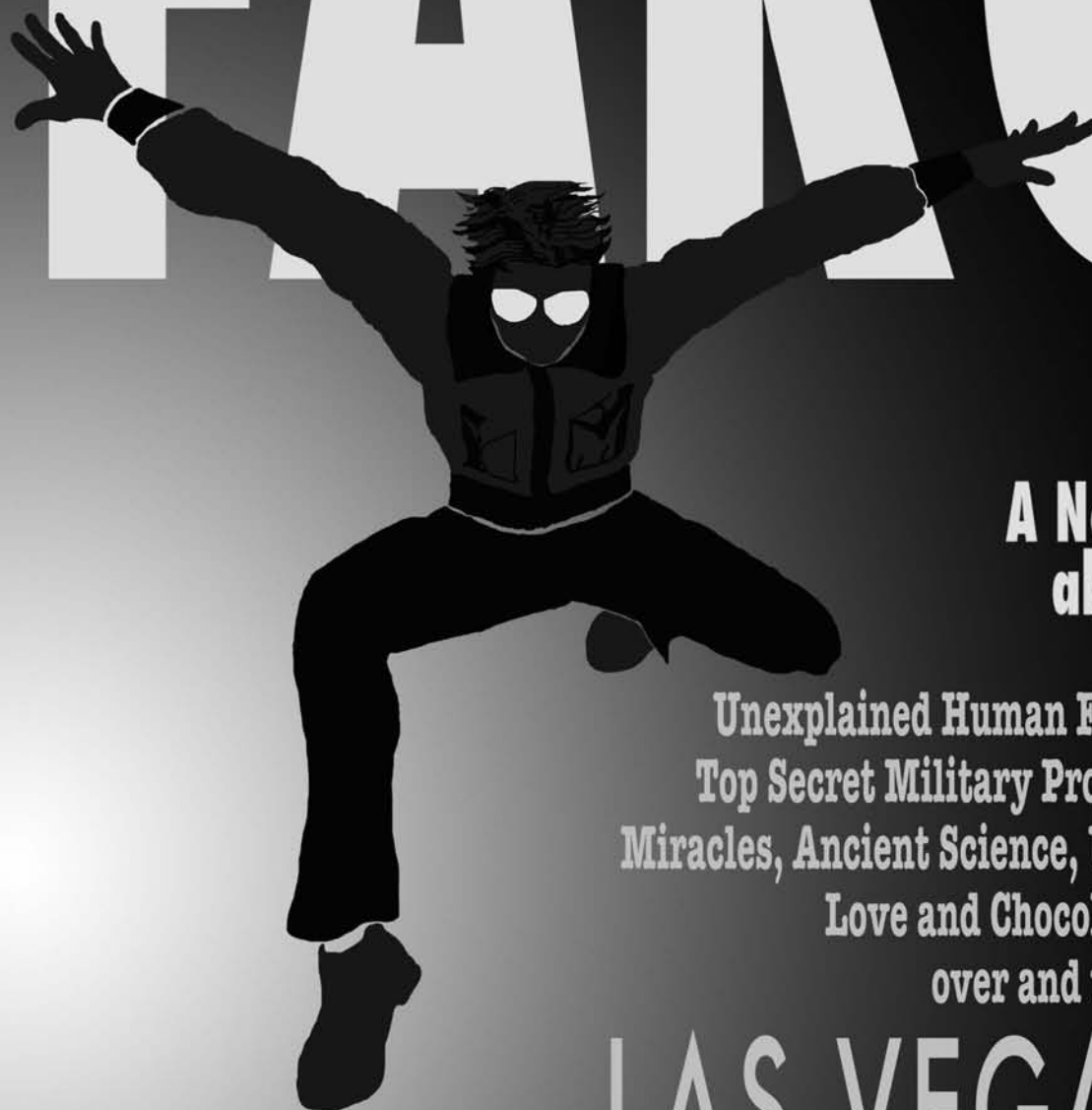
Could the man who spotted the Japanese fleet at dawn sneaking into New Guinea four years earlier have also spotted part of a fleet of disc-shaped objects that were being seen all around the country that first week of July 1947 — including the one that allegedly crashed near Roswell? Nearly seven decades later, Browning’s UFO sighting over Kansas is still unexplained.

*(Editor’s note: This is an ongoing series of stories by Kansas journalist Dave Toplikar about UFO sightings over Kansas that were culled from unclassified documents from the Air Force’s Project Blue Book, Project Sign and Project Grudge.)*





# FARO



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# LAS VEGAS

A NEW NOVEL BY AUTHOR

# DAVE TOPLIKAR

# COMING SOON

# A NIGHT OF CRAB MONSTERS AND A 50 FOOT WOMAN AT THE CINEMA A GO-GO

*By Richard Chamberlain*

For years, I've heard about the cool monster movie events in other cities. And for years I lived in Wichita, KS, where we just didn't have much in the way of monster goodness. Now, after more than a year of living in Kansas City, I'm beginning to discover how much more sci-fi and monster mayhem there is to do here. Last night, I attended my very first **Cinema A Go-Go** in nearby Lawrence with my daughter Kayla. While it may have been at the edge of what she'll do with dear old dad, we both had a great time.

So just what is **Cinema A Go-Go**? It's a double feature movie event held two or three times a year at the wonderful Liberty Hall on Massachusetts Street in Lawrence. The event has been going strong since at least 2009 and is sponsored by Kansas Public Radio, which is home to **The Retro Cocktail Hour**. This incredibly cool weekly radio show is something I know every monster movie kid out there will enjoy. It's pure heaven for the ears and you'll hear music you won't hear anywhere else. With occasional theme weeks like tributes to TV crime dramas and outer space exotica, do yourself a big favor and check out their website. All of their shows are readily available for streaming. Highly recommended!

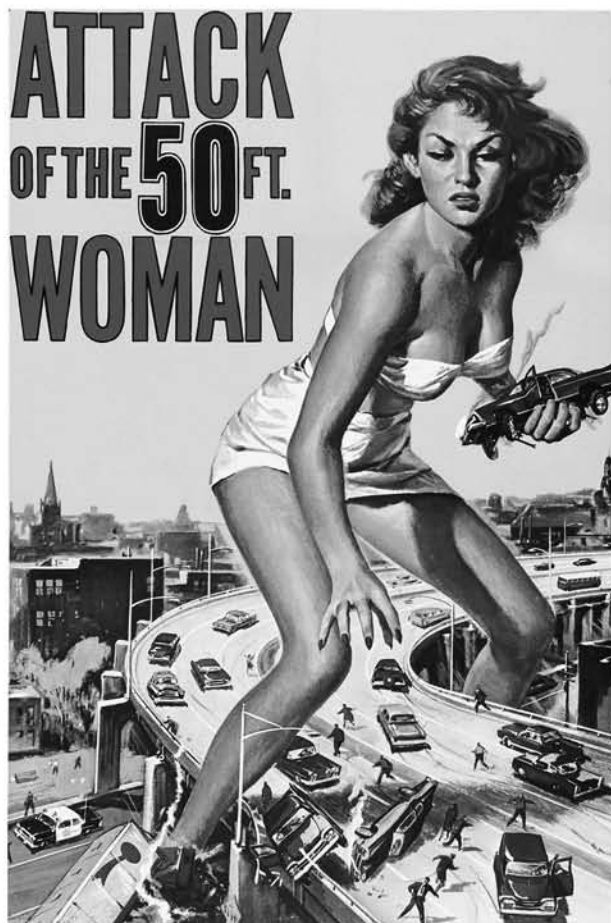


Darrell Brogdon is the host of **The Retro Cocktail Hour** and was the host for the evening of films as well. He served up some very interesting trivia and even gave away some cool prizes during the intermission, such as DVDs, cocktail glasses and yes, a Blue Demon luchador mask! This was a very popular item as they also present those wonderful Santo movies. Of course, they change the name of those events from **Cinema A Go-Go** to **Cinema Con Queso**. Last night though, it was 1950s monster greatness with **Attack of the Crab Monsters** and **Attack of the 50 Foot Woman**.

**Attack of the Crab Monsters** (1957) was directed by the legendary Roger Corman. The most notable

two cast members are Ed Nelson (**Invasion of the Saucer Men, The Brain Eaters**) and Russell Johnson (**Gilligan's Island, The Twilight Zone**). The plot deals with a group of scientists investigating a shrinking island and trying to find out what happened to the previous group. They soon discover the island is full of intelligent crabs as a result of atomic bomb testing. Not only can they absorb the knowledge of the people they eat, they can also mentally communicate in that dead person's voice. A good blast of energy can zap them out of existence though. Of course, the scientists are stranded after their plane explodes and the radio is destroyed. They are running against time before the island disappears. It is definitely cheesy at times but lots of fun and well worth checking out. Did you know that Ed Nelson played both Ensign Quinlan as well as the crab monster?

**Attack of the 50 Foot Woman** (1958) is the classic example of so bad its good cinema. Allison Hayes is the incredibly wealthy Nancy Fowler who is still recovering from mental stress and alcoholism when she encounters an odd object in the desert. The giant sphere is home to an alien of epic proportions. She becomes infected with radiation and turns into a giant herself. This doesn't bode well for her husband Harry (William Hudson), who just wants her money and to run off with the lovely Honey Parker (Kansas City native and July 1959 Playboy Playmate of the Month Yvette Vickers, who died in 2010 but wasn't discovered until almost a year later, mummified and alone in her home). Add in Nancy's man servant Jess, a poor sheriff and his bumbling deputy, and you have an interesting recipe for a unique little flick. Roger Corman designed the movie poster, which is itself considered a classic. Unfortunately, the movie suffers from a crazy script and some very poor special effects. All of which make the movie even that much more entertaining.



Part of the charm of this event is Liberty Hall itself. This is essentially an art house cinema showing independent and foreign films while also presenting concerts and events. It's also home to Liberty Hall Video, an honest-to-goodness video store that still has VHS! The original Liberty Hall dates back to 1854 and was named as such in 1856 because Present Abraham Lincoln once called Lawrence the "cradle of liberty".

It was an opera house before showing its first film in 1924, **The Canary Murder Case**.

It still has the same chandeliers, marble staircases and tile floors nearly 100 year later. It operated as The Jayhawk Theater from the '30s until the '50s before spending a couple of decades as several night



clubs including a famous run as a concert venue The Lawrence Opera House. It was renovated in 1986 by Charley Oldfather and Dave Millstein who turned it once again into a prime spot of entertainment on the most eclectic street in Lawrence. You'll find bookstores like The Dusty Bookshelf, The Raven, and Astro Kitty Comics next to restaurants like The Freestate Brewery and the La Prima Tazza coffee shop.

I had an amazing time and will certainly go back for more. I am anxious to experience my first **Cinema Con Queso** event.

The crowd, which numbered more than 150, cheered at the right moments and booed when the villains deserved it. And there was a lot of laughter but out of pure enjoyment rather than ridicule.

If you live in the Kansas City area, discover for yourself the joy of this event. For me, I have finally found a classic movie event where I know I'm going to become a regular attendee.

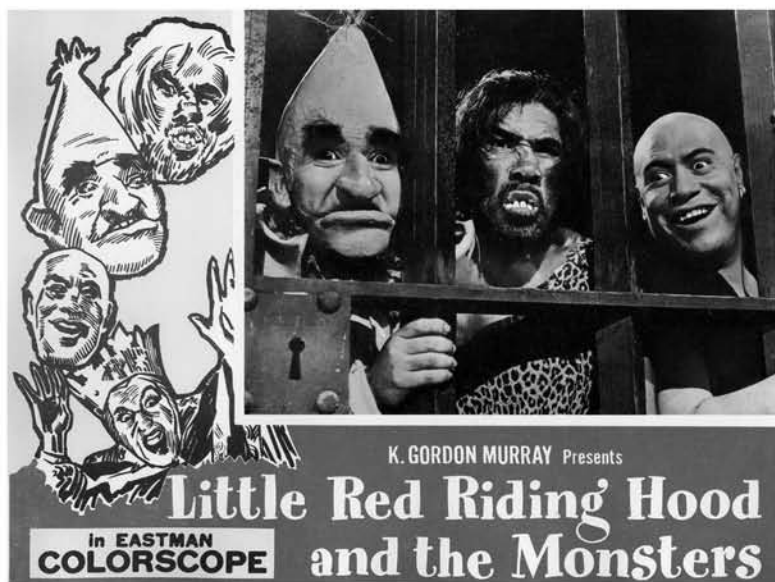


# TOM THUMB AND LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD VS THE MONSTERS

By Richard Chamberlain

Most of us have seen a poorly dubbed "children's" film at one time or another. You know, those kiddie matinees that came from foreign countries and were supposed to entertain us back in the '60s or '70s but were really horror movies in disguise. Sometimes it was true horror while other times it was just nightmare inducing storylines or characters that now leaves the older you wondering what the heck they were thinking when they made that movie. So, ladies and gentlemen of the cinematic jury, may I present **Tom Thumb and Little Red Riding Hood vs. The Monsters** (1962).

Going into this flick, it may be helpful to know that it is actually the third chapter in a trilogy. Not that you need to see the first two films first. It's just helpful to know that the nightmare was really three times as long. Young actress Maria Garcia played the lead role of Little Red Riding Hood in **La Caperucita Roja** aka **Little Red Riding Hood** in 1960. It was in that first film that we see her dog Duke as well as Stinky Skunk, originally a henchman to the Big Bad Wolf. In 1961, she returned in **Little Red Riding Hood and Her Three Friends**. In 1962, the trilogy was wrapped up with **Tom Thumb and Little Red Riding Hood**. In all three films, Santanon stars as Stinky while Manuel "Loco" Valdes is the Wolf. By the third film, things have clearly gone to the dark side as it turns into the craziest monster fest I've personally ever seen.



The Wolf and the Ogre are on trial for treason and turning good. The courtroom is full with just about every creature costume they could probably find south of the border. The judge is a vampire and the jury consists of Frankenstein's monster, a two headed man (one looking like Tor Johnson, the other like a caveman), a creature capable of creating hurricane winds, a pinhead character referred to as Carrot Head and another creep called the Kidnapper. This guy goes on about how he likes kidnapping children because they are tender and make a good broth. Add in a goofy witch and her sister, the Evil Queen (who has stepped right out of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs) and even the robot from **The Robot vs the Aztec Mummy** (1958).

What follows is a crazy storyline of how the Evil Queen wants Little Red Riding Hood and her new friend, Tom Thumb (Cesareo Quezadas "Pulgarcito," Santa Claus) dead. The townsfolk are turned into monkeys, Tom's family are transformed into mice and a good witch (carrying a wand made out of sparklers) helps them on their way to the castle to save the Wolf and the Ogre from being executed. Did I mention the Evil Queen worships Satan and calls upon his services? Or how about how a group of children hang the kidnapper from a tree and turn him into a human piñata? How about monsters being set on fire? Fun for little kids everywhere. Oh yes, let me not forget that there are also several musical numbers. Yes indeed, this movie is warped.



The flick had several titles, several including "monsters" to help lure the American audience. It was released in the U.S. under the guidance of K. Gordon Murray, a name very familiar among horror fans for his horrifically dubbed Mexican monster flicks. The original Tom Thumb and Little Red Riding Hood might have made more sense but I somehow doubt it. Indeed, this is a turkey with all the trimmings. So, do I recommend it? Yes, indeed I do as it falls into that "so bad it's good" category. It was released on home video by Something Weird Video at one time but appears to be out-of-print. However, it is available for free on YouTube, so save yourself the cash and catch it for free. Just don't say I didn't warn you!



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# RARE FILMS ARE NOW AVAILABLE ON ARCHIVE.ORG

Gunther Dedmund over at *The Basement Sublet of Horror*, is currently doing something very cool over at archive.org. His personal video archive is vast and he's now sharing it with everyone. There are some amazing and rare pieces that can now be viewed for your pleasure.

Here are just some examples:

- Science fiction author and University of Kansas professor James Gunn interviewed a series of science fiction authors for his Centron film series "Science Fiction in Literature". He sat down with the legendary Rod Serling in 1970 and, while it was never finished due to rights issues, the "lost" interview is now online for all to see and enjoy.
- In the same film series, James Gunn interviewed another legend in Forest J. Ackermann. Here are some rare film outtakes from that interview. Sure, the sound is missing but the visuals will surely excite any true sci-fi fan.
- Tom Leahy was one of the original television horror hosts. His character, called simply "The Host", was enjoyed by Wichita audiences on and off from the '50s on to the '90s. There are a lot of rare clips now available.
- The raw film footage from Tom Leahy's unfinished late '60s pilot film **Green Hell from the Void** is now online as well. We may never know much more than we do now as time is taking away those with the information on this rare flick. However, the pure enjoyment factor remains for future generations to enjoy and wonder what could have been.
- In 1983, ABC television produced a monumental sci-fi film called *The Day After*, which just happened to be filmed in and around Lawrence, KS. Here is a rare Australian documentary that takes us back to a very different era.
- And, of course, there is the man himself...Gunther! Countless episodes of *The Basement Sublet of Horror* are now online for all to enjoy. Early episodes were edited film parodies of the classic sci-fi and horror films we all enjoy. Personally, I enjoy these so much more than the *Mystery Science Theater 3000*. Check out **Bucket of Blood** and **The Beast from the Beginning of Time** for starters. I think you'll really enjoy the Tom Leahy film as it also includes a lot of cool and rare extras.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg. Take the time to browse around his offerings. I guarantee you'll find something cool and entertaining. And thank you Joel aka Gunther for all the hard work you've been doing in uploading this incredible film library.



# THE FREESTATE COMICON 2014



Joel with Craig Klotz (right) the man behind the show.



Comic creator guest Rik Livingston contributed a "Sketch Box", where artists customize comic book storage boxes.



The BSOH vendor table had quite a number of items to offer visitors this year.



Collaborators on the BSOH comic book and magazine Rik Livingston (left) and Richard Chamberlain (right).

# TEXAS FRIGHTMARE WEEKEND 2015



Alamo Drafthouse had a special 35mm screening of Don Don Coscarelli's "Phantasm" with most of the original cast in attendance.



Don Coscarelli playing with the decorations for a Phantasm party held on Friday Evening.



Don Coscarelli posing for photos on a set constructed for the Phantasm party held later that day.



Meeting Angus Scrimm from Phantasm, who turned out to originally be from Kansas City.



At Don Coscarelli's table, he brought a prop silver sphere from the film.





## BSOH MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTORS

### Richard Chamberlain

(Contributing writer)

A regular routine for Richard growing up was watching the Saturday night Creature Feature with Crematia Mortem on channel 41 KSHB out of Kansas City. He launched his blog, [monstermoviekid.wordpress.com](http://monstermoviekid.wordpress.com), in 2012, and joined the Dread Media podcast in 2015 as a weekly contributor. He's also made appearances on the B Movie Cast and Monster Kid Radio podcasts.



### Bradley Beard

(Contributing artist)

Is a graphic designer, illustrator, and fine artist. He has been creating art for over 30 years dabbling in Fine Art, Pop Art, even creating a monstrous children's book. He has a degree in graphic design from the College of Southern Nevada.



### Dave Toplikar

(Contributing writer)

He is a national and international award winning journalist who lives in Kansas. He's worked as the web-editor for the Lawrence Journal-World and The Las Vegas Sun. He has finished his first science fiction novel "FARO" and is researching a second book on U.F.O. sightings in Kansas based on declassified government documents.









Horror hosts on this page: Fritz the Nite Owl, Dr. Maximillian Madblood, Ghouliardi, Elvira, Joe Bob Briggs, A. Ghastlee Ghoul, Dr. Shocker, Count Gore De Vol, and Ormon Grimsby.